

BEFORE THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE  
JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
LONG-RANGE PLANNING  
HB 6  
TESTIMONY OF THE  
TONGUE RIVER WATER USERS' ASSOCIATION

EXHIBIT 1819  
DATE Jan 31, 2011  
HB 6

January 27, 2011

Mr. Chairman And Members Of The Committee:

- The Tongue River Water Users' Association respectfully submits these comments in support of HB 6, including the Renewable Resource Grant for the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to conduct hydropower feasibility studies for the Tongue River, Cooney, and Painted Rocks Dams.
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has issued DNRC a preliminary permit for the Tongue River Dam, which is in place for another two years.
- The necessary next step that FERC requires is a feasibility study for the project.
- The Tongue River Water Users' Association supports using the existing Tongue River Dam facility for hydropower generation, as it is a renewable resource, and at present, this renewable resource is not being captured.
- The Tongue River Dam was rehabilitated in 1999, and has two tunnels, one of which could be converted for hydropower.
- The dam has two spillways, and with the tunnels can pass 100,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water, and is capable of generating a significant amount of renewable energy.
- The local electric cooperative has a three-phase power line to the dam that can handle 10 megawatts of power.
- There is broad local support for hydropower on the Tongue River Dam.
- A hydropower facility on the Tongue River Dam will maximize use of state-owned water projects, and will provide revenue to help cover the costs of state water projects.
- The Tongue River Water Users' Association committed to a \$5 million long-term loan for rehabilitation of the Dam, and fully supports use of the Dam for hydropower.

Respectfully,

/S/

Art Hayes, Jr., President  
Tongue River Water Users' Association